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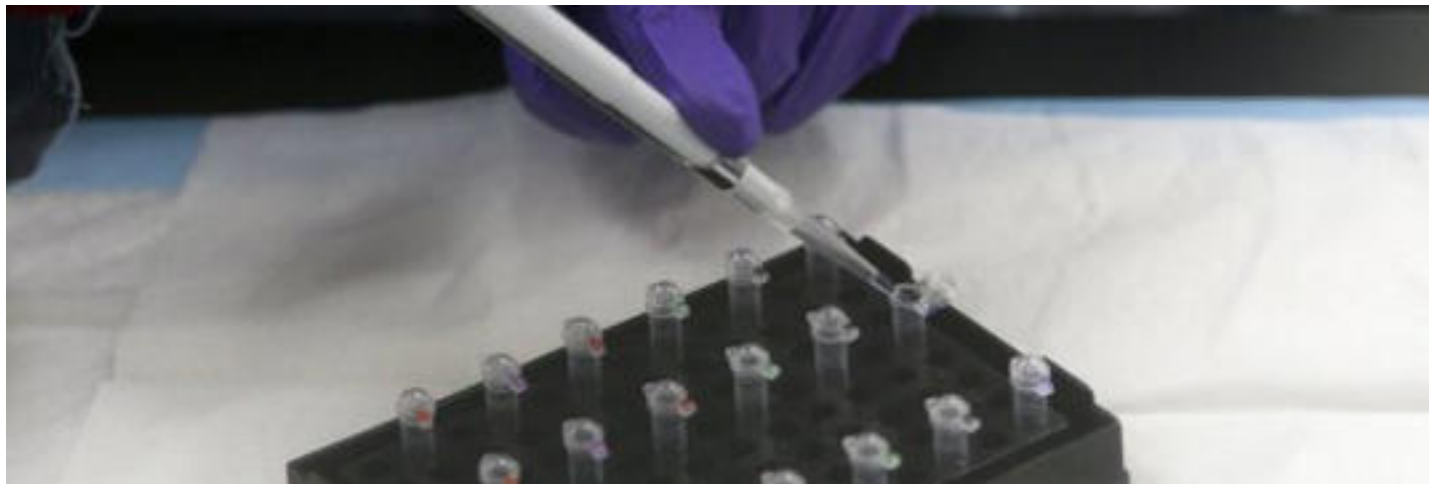
Joel Gehrke - Friday



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How Russia could use your aunt's genealogy hobby to kill you

Your aunt's genealogy hobby could help [China](#) or [Russia](#) design a [biological weapon](#) to kill your family.

That risk alarms policymakers and officials in the United States, even if it's a remote prospect for most people. The emergence of such technology could allow rogue regimes to develop exquisite [assassination programs](#) with more than the usual impunity.



"There are now weapons under development, and developed, that are designed to target specific people," Rep. Jason Crow (D-CO), a member of the committees that oversee the Pentagon and the U.S. intelligence community, said Friday at the Aspen Security Forum in Aspen, Colorado. "That's what this is, where you can actually take someone's DNA, you know, their medical profile, and you can target a biological

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battlefield or make them inoperable.”

The most sophisticated U.S. rivals could use such methods to open a new front against the American population, another senior lawmaker added, through the targeting of [food supplies](#) on a vast scale.

RUSSIA AND UKRAINE SIGN GRAIN EXPORTS DEAL THAT COULD AVERT GLOBAL FOOD CRISIS

“If we look at food security and what can our adversaries do with biological weapons that are directed at our animal agriculture, at our agricultural sector ... highly pathogenic avian influenza, African swine fever,” said Sen. [Joni Ernst](#) (R-IA), a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee. “All of these things have circulated around the globe, but if targeted by an adversary, we know that it brings about food insecurity. Food insecurity drives a lot of other insecurities around the globe.”

The lawmakers outlined those risks to elaborate on a warning aired more obliquely by Army Gen. Richard Clarke, the commander of U.S. Special Operations Command.

“Russia is willing to use those against political opponents. They're willing to use them on their own soil, but then to go in on the soil of a NATO ally in the UK and use those ... and as we go into the future, we have to be prepared for that eventualities. And I don't think we talk about it as much as we should and look for methods to continue to combat.”

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British officials said that they were poisoned with an “extremely sophisticated” chemical weapon. The Skripals survived the attack, but a British woman named Dawn Sturgess [died](#) after unwitting exposure to the poison, which had been disguised in a discarded perfume bottle.

Anxiety about the American vulnerability to advanced chemical or biological weapons has festered within the U.S. intelligence community in recent years, while other domestic policy agencies have evinced less awareness of the potential threat. Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL) has faulted the Department of Health and Human Services since 2019 for jeopardizing “the genomic data of American citizens” by partnering with a laboratory test company linked to the Chinese Communist regime. An HHS watchdog confirmed last year that the public health bureaucracy had not taken such exotic national security risks into account when establishing and operating their programs.

For Crow, the more salient risk comes from the cavalier attitude with which private citizens share their personal information — including their DNA.

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“People will very rapidly spit into a cup and send it to 23andMe and get really interesting data about their background — and guess what? Their DNA is now owned by a private company,” he said. “So we have to have an open and public discussion ... about what does the protection of healthca

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procured and collected by our adversaries for the development of these systems.”

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'Alarm' in Russia grows over U.S.-provided weapons to Ukraine



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[Russia's war in Ukraine](#) is entering its sixth month amid signs Moscow is still far off from its main goals.

Over the last week, Russian Foreign Minister [Sergey Lavrov](#) has said publicly that his country's goal is to ensure Ukrainian President [Volodymyr Zelensky](#) is removed from power, per the [Associated Press](#). Moscow's territorial goals have also [expanded](#) to include more swaths of Ukraine. Both objectives were originally expected to happen within days following the Russian military's initial invasion.

One major reason the Ukrainians have been able to stand their ground despite being outnumbered and outgunned has been the United States's High Mobility

Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS). The U.S. has provided 16 of these for four of

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which were included in an aid package [announced](#) on Friday and likely haven't made it to the front lines yet, while Ukrainian defense leaders have asked for dozens more.

'PERFECT STORM BREWING' IN SYRIAN REFUGEE CAMP, PRISON FOR 'REEMERGENCE OF ISIS,' GRAHAM WARNS

The Ukrainians' use of HIMARS strikes on key Russian command and control nodes has raised "alarm in the Russian nationalist information space," the Institute for the Study of War said in its Sunday [update](#).

A medium-sized Russian telegram channel with slightly more than 30,000 subscribers recently characterized the arrival of the Lockheed Martin-produced HIMARS "as a distinct turning point in the war," as other weapons the U.S. had previously provided, such as Javelins and Stinger missiles, did not make much of an impact, the ISW reported.

"HIMARS changed everything for Russian capabilities in Ukraine," their assessment concluded.

The Russians and Ukrainians are battling for the Donbas, or the eastern region of Ukraine, where fighting between the two sides has gone on for years, though Russia is simultaneously striking other parts of the country through the air.

Russia bombed the port of Odesa over the weekend, less than 23 hours after the two countries signed an agreement to allow Ukrainian exports to leave the ports, which hadn't occurred since before the invasion, prompting fears of increased food insecurity globally.

The Russians are looking to follow their 2014 playbook and will attempt to [annex](#) Ukrainian territory, specifically the city of Kherson and all of the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, the White House warned last week while committing to continue helping the Ukrainians.

"It is our strategic objective to ensure that Russia's invasion of Ukraine is not a strategic success for Putin, that it is a strategic failure for Putin," White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan said last week at the Aspen Security Forum in Colorado. "And that means both that he be denied his objectives in Ukraine and that Russia pay a longer-term price in terms of the elements of its national power, so that the lesson that goes forth to would-be aggressors elsewhere is that, if you try things like this, it comes at a cost that is not worth bearing."

The [Biden administration](#) also warned that Russia could turn to Iran for

indicating the deal has already occurred.

U.S. intelligence agencies have repeatedly declassified and publicly revealed intelligence on what they believe Russia was weighing in [Ukraine](#), and it has turned out to be an "[amazing](#)" deterrent, said Gen. Richard D. Clarke, commander of U.S. Special Operations Command, on Friday at the Aspen Security Forum.

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The war is depleting Russia's military capabilities, and U.K. Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) chief Richard Moore [stated](#) last Thursday at the conference, "I think they're about to run out of steam," and, "Our assessment is that the Russians will increasingly find it difficult to supply manpower and materiel over the next few weeks. They will have to pause in some way and that will give the Ukrainians opportunities to strike back."

CIA Director William Burns recently described the Russian [casualty count](#) as "something in the vicinity of 15,000 killed and maybe three times that wounded."

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